

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 20, 2020

Punta Gorda

Toledo, Belize



**Emerging COVID-19 response**

Through this communication, Ya'axché is assuming its social responsibility by informing the general public that one of our staff members has tested positive for COVID-19. The employee self-isolated from the onset of symptoms and is showing signs of improvement already. No other employees that were in contact with the COVID-19 patient are showing any symptoms and also remain in self isolation. However, in the interest of public health and that of our communities, we have suspended all field and community related activities until an "all clear" and recommendations are provided by the Ministry of Health.

We also take the opportunity to condemn any form of stigmatization of any person diagnosed with COVID-19 especially our staff members. Nobody actively seeks to contract the disease and those who do get infected deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. We are assuring the communities and the general public that Ya'axché takes its social and health responsibilities seriously.

The organization would never put its employees, partners and all other stakeholders at risk or jeopardize their wellbeing. We reach out to our communities and the general public to remain in solidarity with our healthcare personnel and remain informed of the emergency responses to the current pandemic and its reach in southern Belize.

In an effort to ensure proper communication with stakeholders and partners, the following contact information is available for any queries:

Program areas	Contact
Ya'axché Executive Director	christina.garcia@yaaxche.org
Ya'axché Operations / General Information	info@yaaxche.org

As stewards of the Maya Golden Landscape, we urge everyone in our communities to stay calm, remain well informed and follow the recommendations as directed by the Ministry of Health to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

—END.

***"Harmony between nature and human development for the benefit of both"***

**Ya'axché Conservation Trust**

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